AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): An isolated nucleic acid molecule for a salt-tolerant L-myo-inositol 1-phosphate synthase from *Porteresia coarctata* PcINO1 comprising the nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or a nucleic sequence encoding a protein comprising SEQ ID NO: 3.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): A process of obtaining cDNA, encoding a salt-tolerant L-myo-inositol 1-phosphate synthase comprising:

(i) isolation of a full-length cDNA for the L-myo-inositol 1-phosphate synthase gene from the leaf of *Porteresia coarctata* by reverse transcription followed by polymerase chain reaction; and

(ii) sequencing of the isolated L-myo-inositol 1-phosphate synthase gene, wherein the sequenced synthase from *Porteresia coarctata* PcINO1 is encoded by the nucleotide sequence SEQ ID NO: 1 and has a deduced amino acid sequence SEQ ID NO: 3.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The process as claimed in claim 3, wherein the isolated full-length cDNA of PcINO1 is cloned into a suitable bacterial expression vector pET 20B(+) to produce an expression plasmid.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The process as claimed in claim 4, wherein said plasmid is introduced into the host strain E. coli BL-21 (DE 3) thereby forming a transformed host strain and wherein the transformed host strain is cultured ~~by culturing the transformed host strain~~ to express the PcINO1 gene product.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The process as claimed in claim 5, wherein the expressed ~~PINO1~~ PcINO1proteins are solubilized in a solubilization buffer containing 8M Urea, 0.5 M NaCl, 20 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5,10 mM ME and 2 mM PMSF.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): A plasmid comprising the isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A bacteria comprising the isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1.